Boutros Boutros-Ghali

The Disarmament Agenda of the International Community in 1994 and Beyond

Statements of the Secretary-General

United Nations

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Introduction

In October 1992, recognizing that the changed international environment had created new opportunities for the pursuit of disarmament, as well as new challenges, the Secretary-General issued a report entitled *New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post–Cold War Era.*[1] His report highlighted three concepts: *integration* of disarmament and arms regulation issues into the broader structure of the international peace and security agenda; *globalization* through the practical engagement of all States in the disarmament process; and *revitalization* through efforts to build upon past achievements.

In the fourteen months following submission of the report, the international situation further evolved and a number of significant developments took place in the field of disarmament. *The Disarmament Agenda of the International Community in 1994 and Beyond*, which comprises two statements of the Secretary-General delivered in January 1994, conveys present thinking on possible approaches to be taken in the light of the events of the past year and views on a number of specific tasks that the international community must now carry out with a sense of urgency.

[1] A/C.1/47/7. The document was later issued as a United Nations publication (Sales No. E.93.IX.8).

Address of the Secretary-General to the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

Geneva, 12 January 1994

I am grateful to you all for taking the time to come, at short notice, to this special session of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. I value the work of this Board. You bring together a remarkable range of skills and experience in the field of international security. Your advice is important. You are a sounding-board for new ideas.

There are two reasons why I felt it necessary to hold a meeting of this Advisory Board early in 1994.

First, we need to look back over the past year. We need to assess the views of disarmament taken by Member States during the forty-eighth General Assembly.

Second, we must look forward to the coming year. We have to chart the way ahead. We must press on with the task of bringing new life, new urgency, new vigour, to disarmament.

Today, I am seeking your advice on these issues. I will be asking questions. Some of them will require your expert, detailed knowledge. But the crucial questions are three in number:

—What are the key issues?

—What should be on the disarmament agenda of the international community in 1994 and beyond?

—What new concepts, new approaches, can be used to integrate, globalize, and re-invigorate the debate about disarmament?

Eighteen months ago, I published my report to the Security Council, *An Agenda for Peace*. I suggested some ways in which the United Nations could respond to the challenges of peace and security in the post–cold war world. Later, I looked specifically at disarmament, in my report *New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post–Cold War Era*. Both *An Agenda for Peace* and *New Dimensions* have been widely discussed and debated. That process continues.

There is a new consensus on the need for crisis prevention. There is a new awareness that prevention is better than cure in international conflict.

The techniques of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping must be integrated into, and become part of, the disarmament effort. All the techniques of crisis management will be needed. They include early warning, the collection and analysis of information, fact-finding, and other forms of confidence-building. Confidence-building measures are vital, both for arms control and for the maintenance of peace.

Are the advantages of an integrated approach fully understood and appreciated? Should we be doing more to publicize our objectives, and to produce new ideas?

The concept of peace enforcement has not yet been unanimously accepted by Member States. Are there lessons to be learned, for the disarmament effort, from the experience of the United Nations in Iraq and Somalia, or even in El Salvador?

No one doubts that the world remains a dangerous place. Nuclear, chemical, biological and conventional weapons still exist.

States face a whole series of new threats. They include: ethnic and religious conflict; environmental degradation and urban decay; and pauperization and instability in poor countries, especially in Africa. These factors often work together to reinforce conflict and bring bloodshed.

One result has been the proliferation of conventional weapons. In many countries, military expenditure continues to drain resources away from the real needs of people. The establishment of the Register of Conventional Arms was a major step forward. It will help to make military behaviour more predictable. It will increase transparency and openness. It is a historic development. I am pleased that all major arms suppliers and recipient States provided information to the Register in its first year of operation.

The Register will be even more effective when its scope is extended to include holdings and national production. But there can be no cause for satisfaction. Indeed, one effect of export controls and transparency in transfers is simply to contain proliferation.

Regional registers of conventional arms should now be the next step. They have the advantage of allowing the categories of weapons to be registered to reflect the security concerns felt in the region.

The aim must be to reduce arms holdings to levels commensurate with the genuine security needs of States. The United Nations has had much to say about conventional arms. But has the time not arrived for some practical and verifiable measures in this field? More confidence-building measures, particularly at the regional level, are needed.

I am in full support, for example, of the work of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Matters in Central Africa—a grouping of 11 States. Their non-aggression treaty should provide a model of a regional confidence-building measure.

I shall look forward to hearing your ideas and suggestions.

In looking at the question of conventional arms proliferation, we must not leave out of account the broader north/south dimension.

In the fields of arms production and technology, for example, there is a widening gulf between the developed and the developing world. That is where the real roots of insecurity lie. It is a gap which must, somehow, be closed. Some donor countries, concerned about the proliferation of conventional weapons, are using development assistance programmes to influence arms expenditure by recipient countries. They are restricting overseas aid when arms expenditure in the developing country rises above a certain percentage of GNP. But some of those same donor countries are now exporting arms which are surplus to their military requirements or their industrial capacity. In other words, while one hand is offering incentives to restrict arms expenditure, the other is encouraging arms purchases.

How can we put an end to this irrationality?

As far as nuclear disarmament is concerned, all of you will agree that the end of the cold war has not removed the danger of nuclear weapons.

On the contrary, in some cases dangers have actually increased: problems of command and control, and the physical deterioration of weapons systems are

two of the new challenges which we face. Accidents remain a frightening possibility.

But here, too, there are encouraging developments to report. The Conference on Disarmament has given its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a mandate to negotiate a treaty on a comprehensive nuclear test ban. This is already important progress in one of the most vital areas of international security. I strongly hope that the negotiations will be brought expeditiously to a successful conclusion.

Another field where progress is vital is nuclear proliferation. As we prepare for the conference of the parties to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, the creation of a climate of confidence will be vital. Measures need to be taken now to create that climate.

A continuing moratorium on nuclear testing would greatly assist. A follow-up to the idea of a "cut-off" in the production of fissionable materials would also be helpful.

Universal adherence to the NPT must be our goal. The nuclear safeguards of the IAEA must be further strengthened. The agreement between Argentina and Brazil and the IAEA is a good step forward. I strongly support the plans for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. I urge interested parties to tackle the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East with an open mind and greater courage and imagination.

Incentives for non-nuclear-weapon States to take the path of nuclear proliferation must be removed. Transgressors must be given to understand that it is in their best interest to return to compliance. Clarity of vision, and firmness of resolve, will be required.

At its historic session on 31 January 1992, the Security Council declared that "proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security". Members of the Security Council committed themselves to work "to prevent the spread of technology related to the research for or production of such weapons [of mass destruction], and to take appropriate action to that end".

In *New Dimensions*, I continued that theme. I stated that "the question is how to turn the logic of non-proliferation into concerted action".

Last month, I visited North-East Asia, where there is a real concern about nuclear proliferation. I was pleased to note that the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have signed an agreement on the de-nuclearization of the Korean peninsula. I reiterated to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea my view of the seriousness with which the international community would view a withdrawal of the DPRK from the NPT. I repeat my call to the interested parties to resolve, through negotiations, the remaining difficulties.

The goal must be international inspection of nuclear facilities in all the Member States of the United Nations.

In this connection, the decision by Ukraine to accede to the NPT and to negotiate the process of dismantling all nuclear weapons on its territory was an important step. The agreement, when signed, will strengthen international peace and security.

I would welcome your views on the question of access to new technology. During the cold war, the

developed countries restricted access to dual-purpose technologies with a possible military application. The Security Council endorsed this approach. Yet not all Member States are convinced of its validity.

Progress is needed in this field too. I hope that multilateral negotiations on this subject can begin soon. Our aim must be the eventual replacement of the existing export-control regimes by arrangements more satisfactory to the importers. Is there scope for a limited verification regime in this sphere, perhaps similar to the IAEA? To be effective, such a regime would have to depend on an agreement by recipients on limited use, as well as on verification. Are suppliers ready to be more flexible?

Meanwhile, is there scope for improvements to existing supplier regimes? Can the best aspects of each regime be brought together? And, finally, what should be the role of the United Nations?

This topic will, of course, be covered in next month's International Conference on Technology and Arms Transfers. It will be sponsored by UNIDIR and the United States–based Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis. I hope our discussion today will give the participants some food for thought.

In *An Agenda for Peace*, and in many speeches and statements, I have made it clear that the maintenance of international peace and security is a shared undertaking, a partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements.

In disarmament, the "globalization" of the subject implies—perhaps paradoxically—that more should be done by regional organizations. The United Nations

will continue to be the lead player. But how can the role of regional organizations be enhanced?

Finally, I would welcome the views of this Board on the machinery for disarmament. In *New Dimensions*, I called for a reassessment of arms control and disarmament machinery. Much work has already been done. I understand that Member States are in general content with the way the Disarmament Commission has carried out its reforms, both of the agenda and of its working methods. Any advice this Board may have to offer on the machinery of disarmament—including the workings of the Conference on Disarmament and the First Committee—would be of interest to me.

In closing, I must pay tribute to UNIDIR, and in particular to its Director, Mr. Lodgaard. You are, of course, UNIDIR's Board of Trustees. I am happy to associate all of you with the excellent work which UNIDIR is doing. I understand that you will be briefed tomorrow on recent activities. I am sure that you will be impressed by the range of activity under way.

I spoke earlier about 1995, in the context of the NPT. But 1995 will also mark the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations. Is it too much to hope that, by then, we will have made real, concrete progress in disarmament?

I can think of no more fitting tribute to the founders of the Organization. I can think of no better anniversary gift from the United Nations to the peoples of the world. Let us work together to make that hope come true.

Message of the Secretary-General to the Conference on Disarmament*

Geneva, 25 January 1994

It gives me great pleasure to send this message to the participants in this Conference as it opens its 1994 session.

In my report entitled *New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post–Cold War Era*, I stated that the changed international environment had created new opportunities for the pursuit of disarmament, while also posing new challenges. I also emphasized that the end of bipolarity had not diminished, but had rather increased, the need for disarmament. I said that the disarmament process should be seen as an integral part of preventive diplomacy, peace-making, peace-keeping and peace-building.

In my report to the General Assembly last year on the work of the Organization in 1993, I spoke of the significant events that had taken place in the international security environment, and which required new responses and renewed efforts by the international community. I stressed that the momentum created by the many positive breakthroughs of the past year needed to be maintained.

I also pointed out that notable among such achievements was the decision of your Conference to give its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a

* The message was delivered by Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

mandate to negotiate a treaty on a comprehensive nuclear test ban. That decision had been made possible by the crucial commitment of nuclear-weapon States to such a treaty. It represented a culmination of the efforts of the international community as a whole to bring about the long-cherished goal of the total prohibition of nuclear testing.

The recently concluded session of the General Assembly further confirmed this positive trend towards the consolidation of the pattern of cooperation among Members of the United Nations in the vital sphere of security, arms limitation and disarmament, as exemplified by the growing number of resolutions adopted by consensus in this field. This will no doubt positively affect your deliberations and negotiations in the Conference. The resolution on the comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, sponsored by more than 157 Member States at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, and adopted by consensus, is a milestone in the efforts of the international community to ban all nuclear tests in all environments for all time.

I am gratified that, pursuant to this resolution, and following consultations during the intersessional period, the Conference will now give priority to negotiations for a universal, multilaterally and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Such a treaty would undoubtedly contribute effectively to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, to the process of nuclear disarmament and, therefore, to the enhancement of international peace and security. It would also contribute greatly towards the successful outcome of the 1995 review and extension conference of

the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. I am sure that your Conference will seize the opportunity now before it to achieve, as a matter of urgency, this long-sought goal of the international community.

The Conference will also be giving priority to the question of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Admittedly, the best guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the total elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth. However, unless this goal is realized, it is important for the international community to develop, in addition to the positive guarantees contained in Security Council resolution 255 (1968), effective measures or arrangements for negative security assurances as an essential element for an effective regime for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Conference on Disarmament should now take a fresh look at the question of negative security assurances in the light of the recent positive developments in the international scene. It should pursue this issue with renewed vigour.

Further evidence of the importance attached by the international community to the cessation of the nuclear arms race, to nuclear disarmament and to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects was the adoption by the General Assembly of a consensus resolution recommending the negotiation in the most appropriate international forum of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. I am aware of the

complexity of this issue; I am confident, however, that the Conference will find the most appropriate arrangement to address it.

Transparency in armaments has now become an important new focus of your endeavours. The establishment of the Register of Conventional Arms is an event of great importance. The potential of the Register as a confidence-building measure through increased openness and transparency in military matters cannot be overemphasized. I am pleased that more than 80 States, including most major arms suppliers and recipient States, have provided information to the Register in its first year of operation, thus making most of the world's trade in major conventional arms transparent. Later this year, a group of experts will be convened to consider the continued operation of the Register and its expansion: this might include the addition of further categories of equipment, and data on military holdings and procurement through national production. This would result in a far-reaching international confidence-building tool which could create unprecedented transparency both in the international arms trade and in the national production of arms. It could also culminate in the establishment of an early-warning system which would pave the way for the reduction of conventional armaments to the lowest possible level consistent with the principle of the legitimate security needs of States. I therefore urge you to continue to address this issue with determination, with a view to contributing to this goal, and thus to ensuring that disarmament and arms control play a major part in the efforts of the United Nations in the field of preventive diplomacy and peace-making.

Your Conference has, over the years, done useful work on the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The new international political environment suggests that the world community should seize the opportunity to ensure that space technology is effectively used to promote the security of all States. New ideas have been put forward, especially in the field of confidence-building measures. I urge you to explore these avenues further.

The question of expansion of membership of the Conference has been on your agenda for a number of years. I hope that agreement will soon be reached to ensure that the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body better reflects the current geopolitical situation, and is able to meet the security challenges of the 1990s and the next century. This would also greatly facilitate your ongoing consultations on the review of the agenda of the Conference.

The tasks ahead of your Conference are daunting. With the determination and commitment that have characterized your action during the last few years, I believe that they can be fulfilled.

I wish you every success in your endeavours.

Litho in United Nations, New York
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